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Special Committee on the Situation with regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples

Summary record of the 2nd meeting
Held at Headquarters, New York, on Thursday, 12 April 2018, at 3 p.m.

Chair: Mr. Webson ..... (Antigua and Barbuda)

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The meeting was called to order at 3.05 p.m.

Adoption of the agenda

1. *The agenda was adopted.*

Organization of the 2018 Pacific regional seminar (A/AC.109/2018/19)

2. **The Chair** said that, in accordance with the Committee's programme of work and timetable as approved during its meeting of 22 February 2018, he invited the Committee to consider preparations for the Pacific regional seminar, starting with the dates and venue.

3. The Government of Grenada had expressed its interest in hosting the seminar and communications had been circulated to all Committee members to that end. Bureau members had unanimously expressed their firm support for that offer and had recommended that the Committee should accept it. He took it that the Committee wished to accept the offer to hold the seminar in Grenada in 2018.

4. *It was so decided.*

5. **The Chair** thanked the Government of Grenada, on behalf of the Committee, for offering to host the regional seminar. He said that the Bureau had first considered its usual practice of holding the regional seminar around the third week of May, thus coinciding with the annual Week of Solidarity with the Peoples of Non-Self-Governing Territories that started on 25 May. However, since Grenada was unable to host the seminar on those dates, the Bureau recommended that the Committee should consider holding the seminar from 9 to 11 May 2018. He took it that the Committee wished to hold the regional seminar on the proposed dates.

6. *It was so decided.*

7. **Ms. McGuire** (Grenada) said that her delegation was grateful for the opportunity to host a regional seminar for the second time and hoped that the 2018 seminar would facilitate cooperation and discussion, in particular in relation to the proposed theme, "Implementation of the Third International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism: towards the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals in the Non-Self-Governing Territories: social, economic and environmental challenges". The Committee's work had extraordinary significance for peoples around the world and was of great importance to Grenada, which had already travelled the path of decolonization. Her Government supported the efforts of all those fighting for decolonization and looked forward to the day when all peoples could enjoy their right to self-determination.

8. **Mr. Hermida Castillo** (Nicaragua) said that the Committee should make every effort to ensure that representatives of every Non-Self-Governing Territory were able to attend the regional seminar to discuss their views in depth with the Committee. It was therefore crucial to send the invitations immediately, since the seminar would take place very soon.

9. **Mr. Sarufa** (Papua New Guinea) said that his delegation hoped that a State from the Pacific region would be able to host the next Pacific regional seminar. His delegation welcomed the timely and relevant proposed theme and agenda for the upcoming seminar; it was essential to hold the administering Powers accountable for the delivery of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in the Non-Self-Governing Territories and ensure that peoples under colonial administration were not left behind.

10. It was regrettable that the vestiges of colonialism continued to undermine self-determination in the 17 Non-Self-Governing Territories two years from the end of the Third International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism. The Committee must reinvigorate its work to eradicate colonialism, including by considering creative ways to bring about lasting solutions. His delegation welcomed the Committee's recent visit to New Caledonia. Other administering Powers should take their cue from France, which was the only one to have permitted such a visit over the previous five years. The Committee should monitor the situation in New Caledonia in the run-up to the self-determination referendum in November 2018 to ensure that the referendum was fair, free and just and resulted in an outcome that was acceptable to the people of New Caledonia.

11. **Ms. Yánez Loza** (Ecuador) said that her delegation welcomed the proposed theme of the Pacific regional seminar. There would be no better way to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals in the Non-Self-Governing Territories than in an environment of self-determination and freedom. It was also worth noting that a number of resolutions related to the work of the Committee, such as General Assembly resolution 1803 (XVII) on permanent sovereignty over natural resources, were very relevant to the Goals.

12. **Mr. Daunivalu** (Fiji) said that, while his delegation had been involved in the Committee's activities less than it would have liked, it remained committed to its mandate. His delegation also fully supported the proposals for the Pacific regional seminar as set out in document A/AC.109/2018/19 and regretted that Fiji had been unable to host the regional seminar.

13. **Mr. Djani** (Indonesia) said that his delegation welcomed the proposed theme of the seminar and would support the preparatory work for the event. His delegation remained committed to contributing to the work of the Committee.

14. **Ms. Rodríguez Silva** (Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela) said that the proposed theme of the Pacific regional seminar was very relevant in light of the particular vulnerabilities of the Non-Self-Governing Territories and the challenges they faced in the planning and implementation of strategies to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals. The Territories would need continuous cooperation and assistance from the specialized agencies and other United Nations entities to overcome cultural, environmental, demographic, economic and political hurdles to the exercise of their right to self-determination. Above all, it was crucial that the new political entities that would be established upon completion of the decolonization process were in a position to implement the 2030 Agenda, promote development and consolidate their sovereignty. It would not be possible to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals, or any kind of development, while territories and peoples remained under colonial domination.

15. As the end of the Third International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism approached, the administering Powers must be insistently called upon to comply with Chapter XI of the Charter of the United Nations by intensifying their efforts to adopt the measures necessary to enable the Non-Self-Governing Territories to fully exercise their right to self-determination on a case-by-case basis and in accordance with all relevant resolutions and decisions of the General Assembly. Her delegation welcomed the visit that had taken place to New Caledonia and looked forward to the upcoming self-determination referendum in that Territory. In that connection, it commended France for its support for the fulfilment of the Committee's mandate.

16. The Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela remained committed to the cause of decolonization. The Committee should strive continuously and uncompromisingly to bring colonialism to an end to allow all peoples to live alongside one another in peace.

17. **Mr. Callis Giragossian** (Chile) said that his delegation welcomed the proposed theme of the Pacific regional seminar. It also wished to stress the importance of making the Committee's documents available in all six official languages, in line with the spirit of multilingualism.

18. **Mr. Prasad** (India) thanked Grenada for hosting the Pacific regional seminar. His delegation stood ready to support Grenada in its preparations.

19. **The Chair** said he took it that the Committee wished to approve the guidelines, rules of procedure, theme and agenda for the seminar (A/AC.109/2018/19).

20. *It was so decided.*

21. **The Chair** recalled that the Committee delegation to the seminar would include four members representing each of the regional groups within the Committee (African States, Asia-Pacific States, Eastern European States and Latin American and Caribbean States). He asked the respective regional groups to submit their nominations for those members as soon as possible and reminded participants that the United Nations would bear the cost of travel and daily subsistence allowance of all members of the delegation. In addition, he took it that the Committee authorized the Chair to finalize the list of experts and representatives of non-governmental organizations to be invited to the seminar.

22. *It was so decided.*

23. **The Chair** said that elected or appointed officials of the Non-Self-Governing Territories would be invited to the seminar and the United Nations would bear their travel costs. Invitations would also be extended to the administering Powers and other Member States, specialized agencies within the United Nations system and some regional organizations, but travel costs for those participants would not be borne by the Organization.

24. **Ms. Yánez Loza** (Ecuador) asked whether the administering Powers and the Non-Self-Governing Territories would have the same number of representatives at the seminar.

25. **The Chair** said that there would not be parity in numbers, as there were four administering Powers and 17 Non-Self-Governing Territories, but that officials from all Territories would be invited.

Other matters

26. **Mr. Rivero Rosario** (Cuba) said that the visit to New Caledonia had taken place the same year as the forthcoming referendum on self-determination and, owing to the sensitiveness of the issue, the mission team had decided not to make any statements to the press. In order to collect as much information as possible, the team had held 35 meetings in five days. The meetings had been held in a spirit of great trust in the Committee and in the United Nations as a whole, and the concerns raised during the previous mission, conducted in 2014,

had disappeared. Some of the people met during the mission had expressed the wish that the United Nations would be present at the time of the referendum. The mission team had subsequently met in Paris with the French Minister for Overseas Territories. The mission report would be ready at the beginning of June.

27. **The Chair** thanked the representative of Cuba for responding to a last-minute request to lead the mission and for all his efforts.

The meeting rose at 4 p.m.